

1870

Judge Penzance No. 2

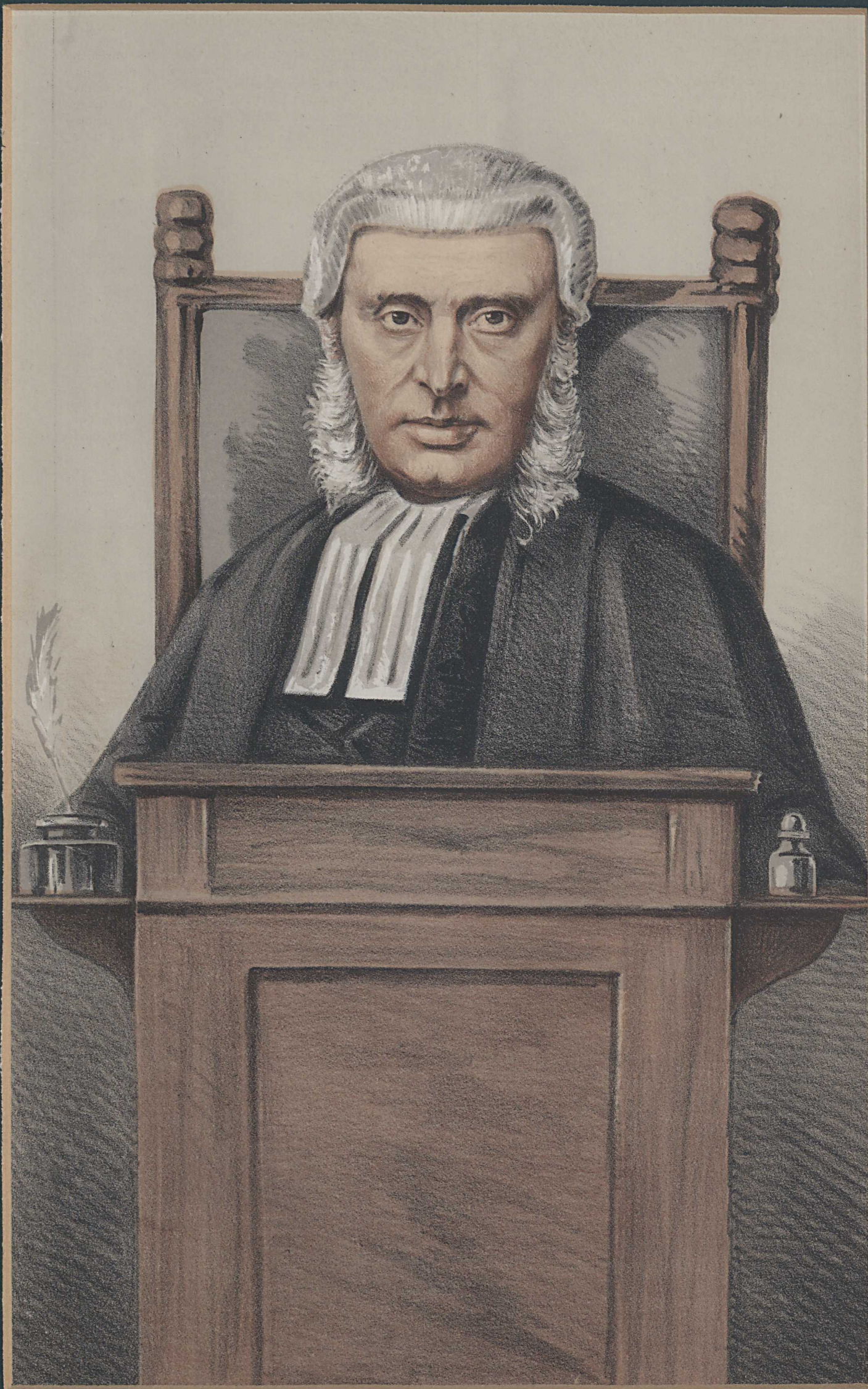
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JUDGES. No. 2.

LORD PENZANCE.

PRESIDING, as he does, in the Court of Probate and Divorce, Lord Penzance may be considered the Judge of dissolution; and he gives to the entanglements which arise from testators and married people not having known their own mind and intentions an impartial attention, calculated to satisfy all but the defeated parties to the dispute.

As a Judge and Peer, Lord Penzance holds a dual existence, which has not always been attended with so much credit as in his case. It was reproached to Lord Mansfield that, "unfortunately for his fame, as well as for his tranquillity, he continued to mix in politics after he ceased to be in the service of the Crown as an advocate, and took a part in the business of Government, all the more objectionable in his position, that it was much more active than it was open and avowed." Such a reproach cannot be addressed to Lord Penzance; but his utterances in the House of Peers disclose very plainly the faith with which he holds to the Liberal principles and party. His views of the law are in accordance with the most advanced popular opinion, and he has used his influence to procure the passing of an Act which revolutionises the whole English theory of evidence, and the acceptance of a bill which will revolutionise the law of marriage. The latter measure would tend to make the matrimonial bond more endurable, and thereby will probably lessen Lord Penzance's work in divorce, but the former will greatly increase it; and both are eminently desirable reforms. In addition to this he has supported the measure for giving provisional protection to the funds of Trades Unions, and he strongly advocated the passing of the Irish Church Bill. That these were party measures was a mere accident; they can but reflect credit upon whomsoever can claim a share in their success and Lord Penzance's share in it is calculated to increase the confidence in his application when in Court of the same principles of justice which he advocates when in Parliament.